

lower region, 2) a diameter less than said upper region but greater than said lower region, or 3) a diameter equal to said lower region, wherein said lower region has a sufficiently small bore to hold an air bubble in it with an aqueous solution above and below it.

53. (Amended). The method of claim 52 further comprising detecting a band of particles in the lower region by a detection technique, which could not have been detected if the band were in the upper region by the same detection technique.

Cancel non-elected claims 54 through 56 without prejudice or disclaimer.

Add new claims 57 through 61 as follows.

57. (New) The method of claim 52 wherein the sample is a biological sample.

58. (New) The method of claim 52 wherein the particles are microorganisms.

59. (New) The method of claim 52 wherein at least two different fluids are present, each in different regions.

60. (New) The method of claim 59 wherein said two different fluids are held separately with substantially no diffusion between each before centrifugation.

61. (New) The method of claim 52 wherein an air bubble separates the middle region from the lower region.